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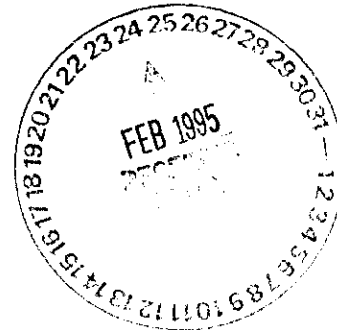
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Department of Energy

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Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550
Richland, Washington 99352

JAN 26 1995



Ms. Donna Powauke
Nez Perce Indian Tribe
P.O. Box 365
Lapwai, Idaho 83540-0365

Dear Ms. Powauke:

OFFER TO COORDINATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF A PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES LIST FOR THE COLUMBIA RIVER COMPREHENSIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (CRCIA)

The CRCIA Project at the Pacific Northwest Laboratory (PNL) is supporting the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in evaluating the current human and ecological risks from the Columbia River attributable to past and present activities on the Hanford Site. Human risk from exposure to radioactive and hazardous materials will be addressed for a range of river use options. Ecological risk to the river ecosystem will also be evaluated for radioactive and hazardous materials. If unacceptable levels of risk are found, remedial actions will be initiated consistent with the National Contingency Plan and the Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order through the Hanford Past Practice Strategy.

Steps in the ecological risk analysis include: 1) identification of the contaminants of concern, 2) identification of a set of animal and plant species that will be analyzed, 3) performance of a preliminary risk analysis, and 4) performance of a final risk analysis. A document defining the draft list of contaminants of concern will be published in late January 1995. This document identifies approximately 30 contaminants for which a more detailed impact assessment should be performed. This document will be forwarded for your review and coordination.

There are hundreds of species of plants and animals in the Columbia River. It is not cost effective to analyze the real or potential impact on all species of every radioactive or hazardous material used at the Hanford Site. The proposed approach in the CRCIA is to define a limited set of species for which a detailed impact analysis will be performed. The approach has three steps: 1) identification of a comprehensive list of plant and animal species in the Columbia River, 2) definition of a set of criteria to identify species that should be studied in detail, and 3) application of the criteria to get the reduced species list.

PNL has performed a draft pass through the three steps in defining the species of concern list. In an effort to provide an earlier opportunity for coordination for the species of concern effort than what was available for the contaminants of concern effort, and to ensure that the tribes values are captured in the selection criteria, DOE and PNL are extending an invitation to meet with you at a time and location of your choosing, to discuss the overall approach and preliminary results. Should you wish to set a date for this discussion, please contact Mr. Randy Brich of my staff. DOE would appreciate having the discussions and feedback by February 22, 1995, thereby allowing for incorporation of comments prior to issuing a public review draft of the document.

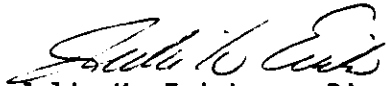
- Ms. Donna Powaukee

-2-

JAN 26 1995

If you desire to discuss this matter further or require additional information, please contact Mr. Brich at (509) 376-9031.

Sincerely,



Julie K. Erickson, Director
River Sites Restoration Division

RSD:RFB

cc: M. Bauer, YIN
R. Cruz, NPT
H. Rueben, NPT
J. Wilkinson, CTUIR